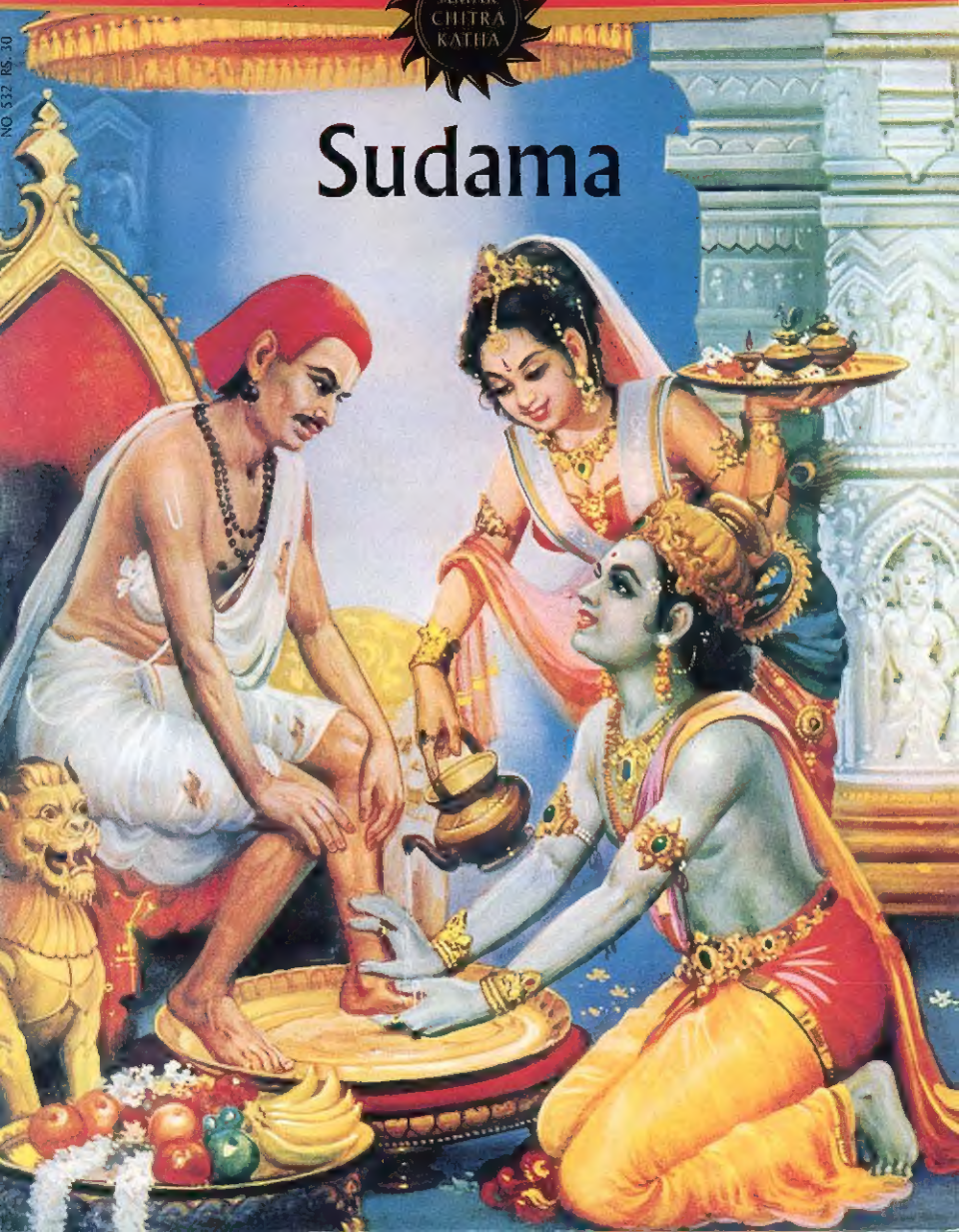
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

NO 532 RS. 30

Sudama



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INDIA BOOK HOUSE

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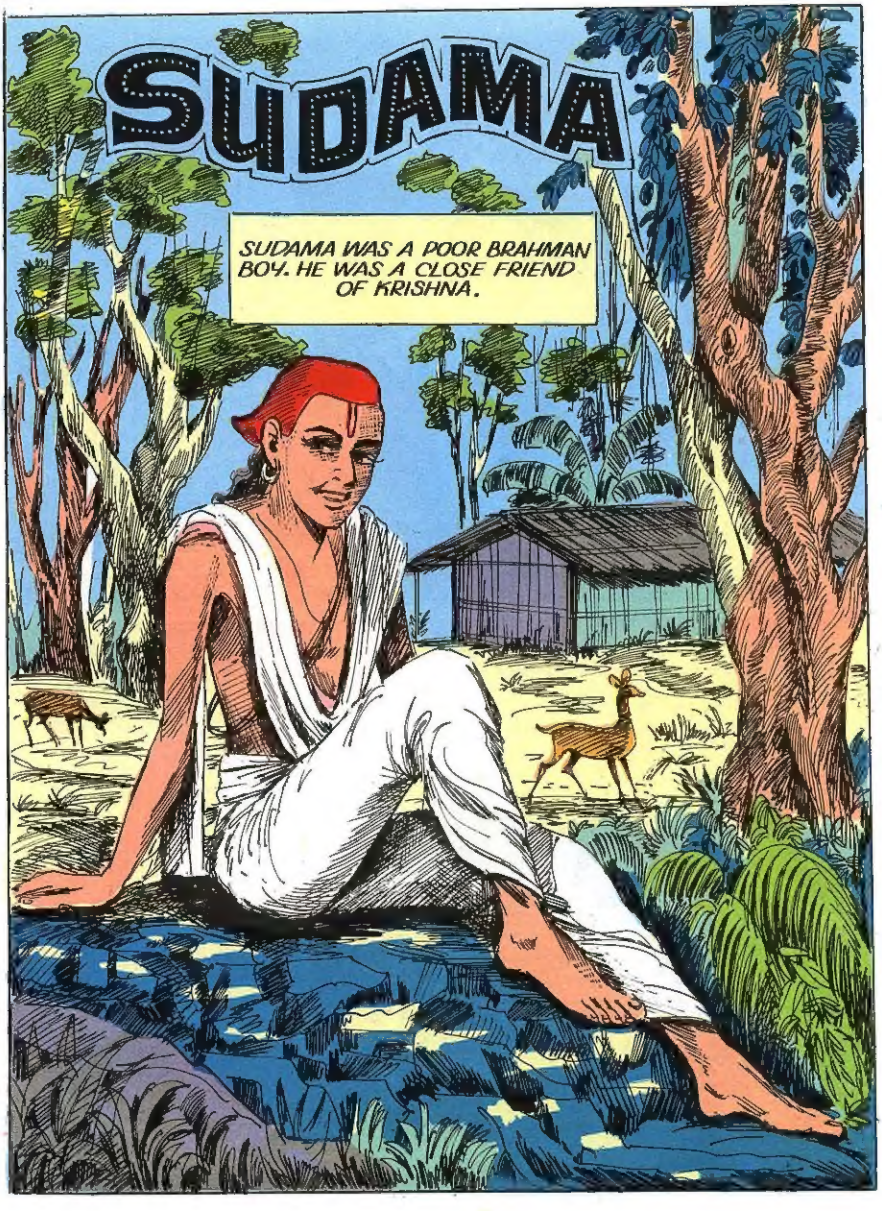

SUDAMA
SUDAMA WAS A POOR BRAHMAN BOY. HE WAS A CLOSE FRIEND OF KRISHNA.

SUDAMA AND KRISHNA HAD MET IN GURU SANDIPANI'S ASHRAM.

SUDAMA, TAKE KRISHNA TO THE YAGNASHALA.*

YES, MY LORD.

*A PLACE WHERE THE SACRED FIRE IS KEPT BURNING.

IN THE YAGNASHALA -

YOUR RENDERING OF THE VEDIC HYMNS IS ALMOST PERFECT.

I HAVE GOT IT FROM MY FATHER. GURU SANDIPANI AND HE WERE GOOD FRIENDS.

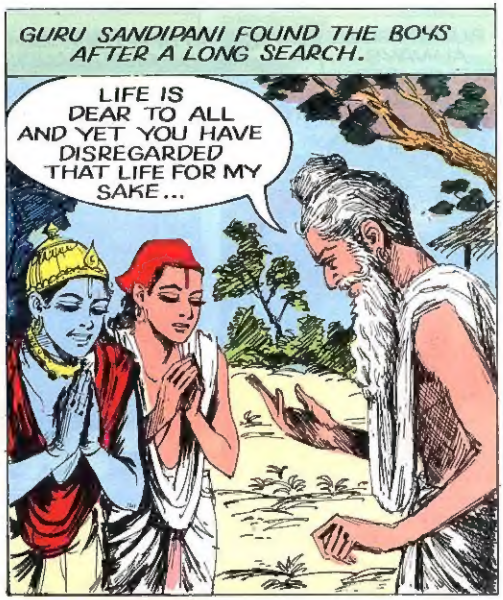
SUDAMA OFTEN PRACTISED WITH KRISHNA.

ONE DAY, SANDIPANI'S WIFE CALLED THE BOYS TO HER.

WILL YOU GO AND BRING ME SOME FIREWOOD FROM THE FOREST?

SOON AFTER THEY ENTERED THE FOREST...
...A TERRIBLE STORM BROKE OUT.
KRISHNA!
AT LAST THE STORM CLEARED, BUT NIGHT HAD FALLEN.
WE HAVE LOST OUR WAY.
DO NOT BE FRIGHTENED, SUDAMA. I AM WITH YOU.

WHEN THE BOYS DID NOT RETURN –
I AM WORRIED ABOUT THE BOYS. I WILL GO AND LOOK FOR THEM.

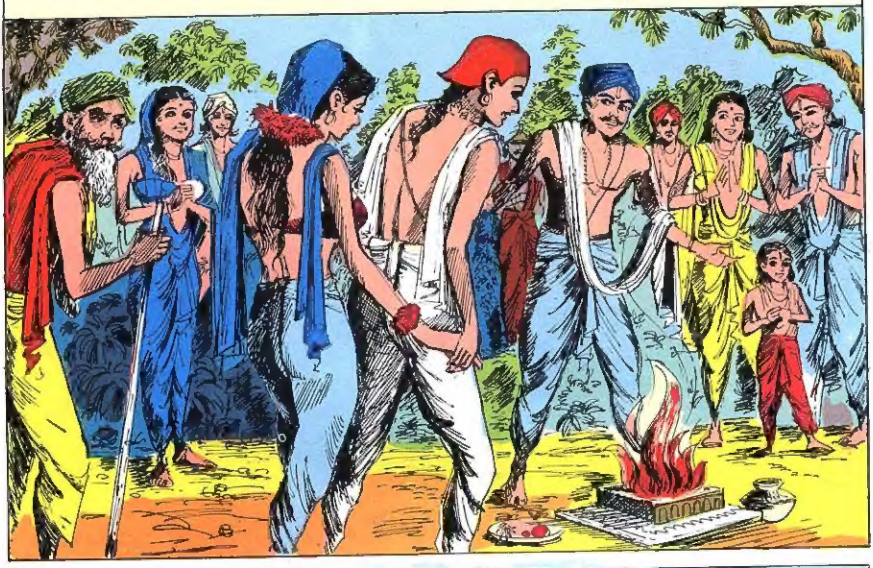

GURU SANDIPANI FOUND THE BOYS AFTER A LONG SEARCH.
LIFE IS DEAR TO ALL AND YET YOU HAVE DISREGARDED THAT LIFE FOR MY SAKE...

AND HE GRANTED THEM A BOON.
YOU WILL NOT LOSE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE VEDAS IN THIS WORLD OR THE NEXT.

AT LAST THE PERIOD OF THEIR STUDIES WAS OVER.
TOMORROW WE PART AND GO OUR WAYS.

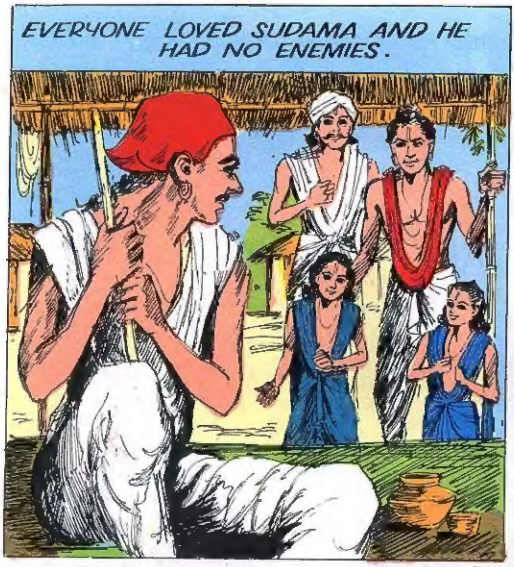
YEARS PASSED, KRISHNA BECAME THE LORD OF DWARKA AND MARRIED PRINCESS RUKMINI, THE GODDESS OF PROSPERITY INCARNATE.

SUDAMA MARRIED A BRAHMAN GIRL.



HE DID NOT CARE FOR WORLDLY PLEASURES...

...AND LIVED IN DIRE POVERTY.

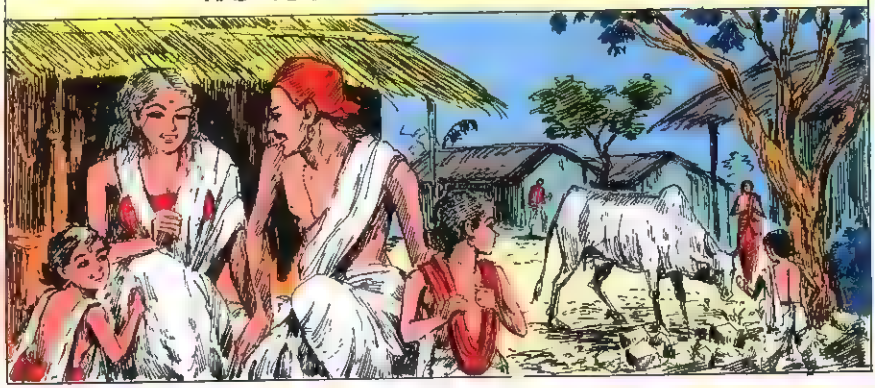

EVERYONE LOVED SUDAMA AND HE HAD NO ENEMIES.

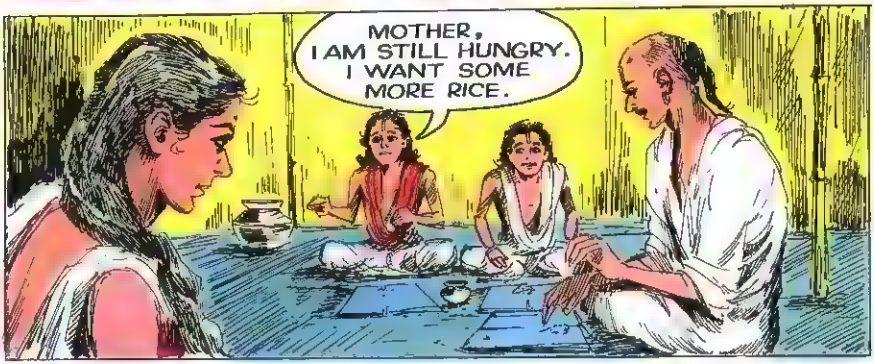
BUT HIS WIFE WAS SORELY TRIED BY THE LIFE SHE HAD TO LEAD.

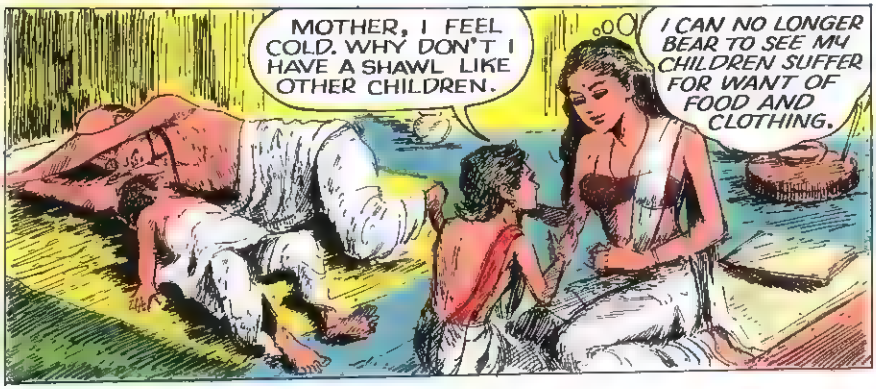
SHE PATIENTLY BORE IT ALL...
THE LOVE OF MY LORD SUSTAINS ME.

...FOR SHE LOOKED UPON SUDAMA AS HER GOD.
HE IS MY GOD!

SOON CHILDREN WERE BORN TO THEM AND THE CHILDREN TOO HAD TO LEAD AN AUSTERE LIFE.



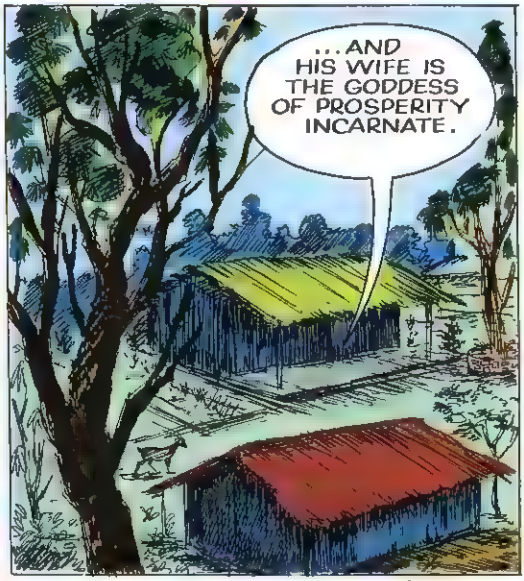




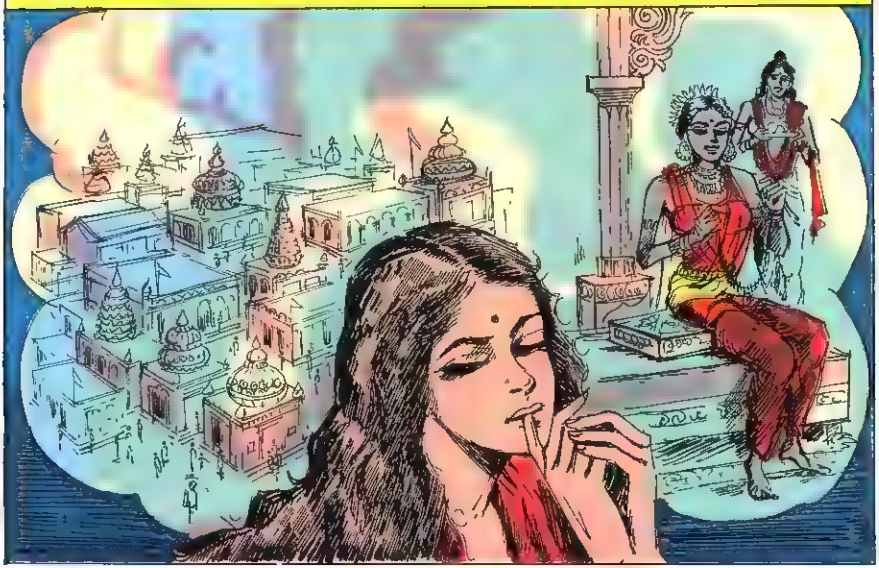
THAT NIGHT WHEN THE CHILDREN HAD SLEPT—

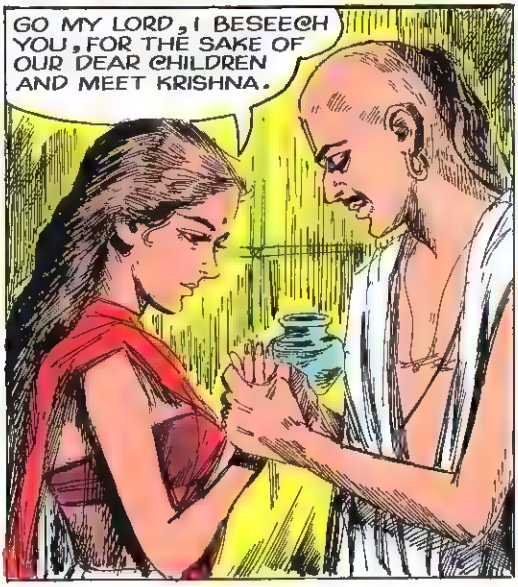
I BEG YOU TO BE PATIENT WITH ME, MY LORD.

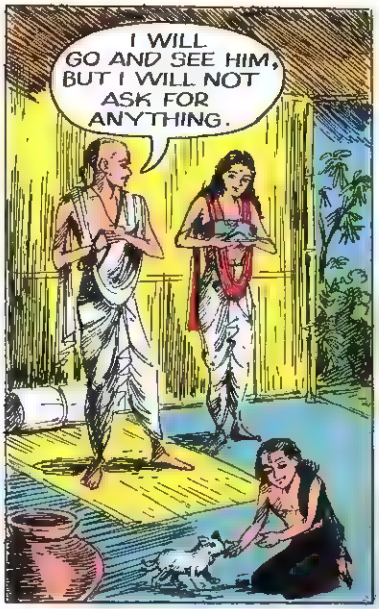
DO NOT FEAR. SPEAK OUT YOUR HEART, MY GOOD LADY. DO NOT FEAR.

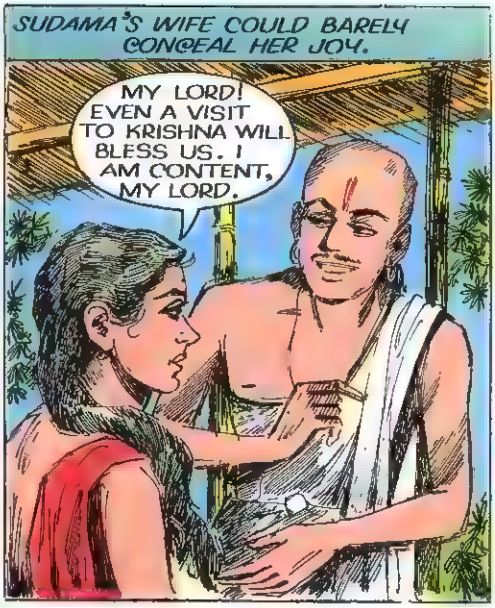


THE PROSPERITY OF DWARKA FLASHED BEFORE HER MIND'S EYE.

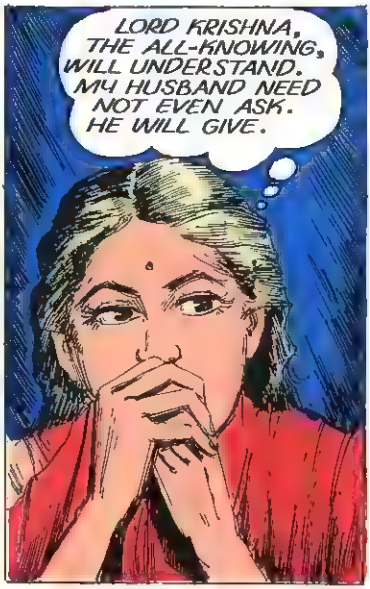





I WILL GO AND SEE HIM, BUT I WILL NOT ASK FOR ANYTHING.


SUDAMA'S WIFE COULD BARELY CONCEAL HER JOY.
MY LORD! EVEN A VISIT TO KRISHNA WILL BLESS US. I AM CONTENT, MY LORD.

HOPE HAS ALREADY ENTERED MY HEART.


LORD KRISHNA, THE ALL-KNOWING, WILL UNDERSTAND. MY HUSBAND NEED NOT EVEN ASK. HE WILL GIVE.

ONE THOUGHT OCCURRED TO BOTH OF THEM AT THE SAME TIME.

I CANNOT SEND MY HUSBAND EMPTY-HANDED.

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING IN THE HOUSE? ANYTHING WORTHY OF BEING PRESENTED TO KRISHNA?

SUDAMA'S WIFE SUDDENLY REMEMBERED SOMETHING.

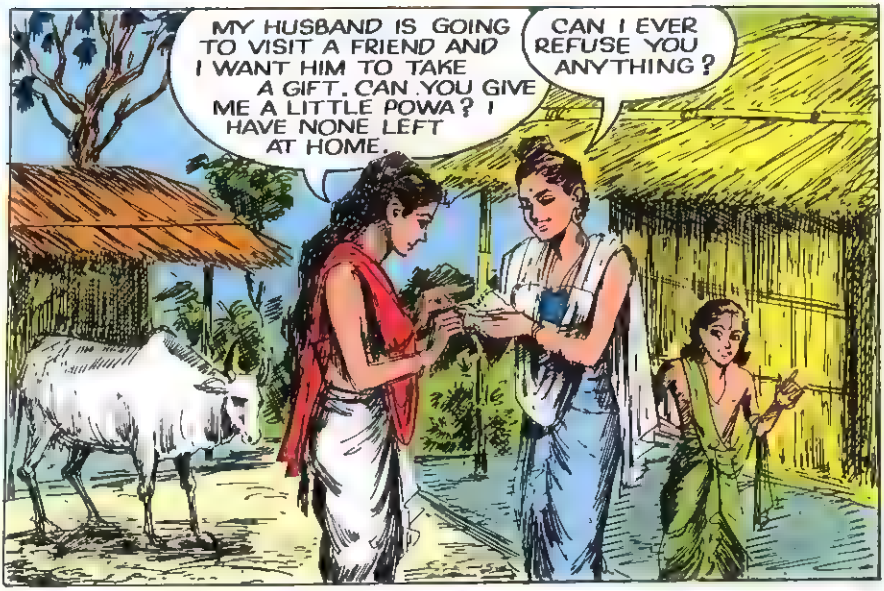
MY LORD USED TO TELL ME HOW KRISHNA LOVED TO EAT POWA*.

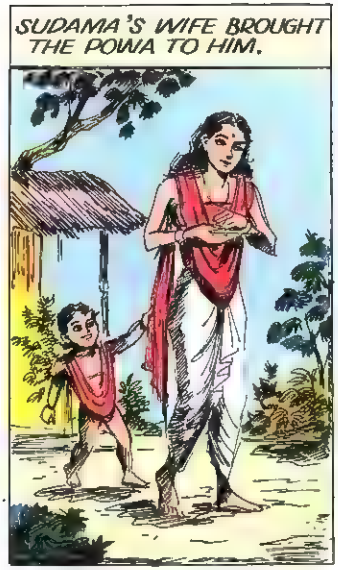
*FLATTENED RICE.

SUDAMA TOO REMEMBERED HOW KRISHNA HAD SNATCHED SOME POWA FROM HIS HAND.

I'LL GO TO OUR NEIGHBOUR AND BORROW A FEW HANDFULS OF POWA.

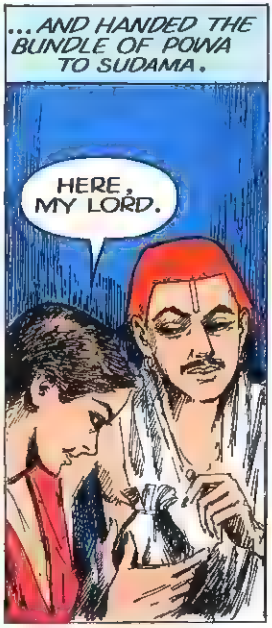
MY GOOD WOMAN, SHE EVEN REMEMBERS MY BELOVED FRIEND'S TASTES!


MY HUSBAND IS GOING TO VISIT A FRIEND AND I WANT HIM TO TAKE A GIFT. CAN YOU GIVE ME A LITTLE POWA? I HAVE NONE LEFT AT HOME.
CAN I EVER REFUSE YOU ANYTHING?

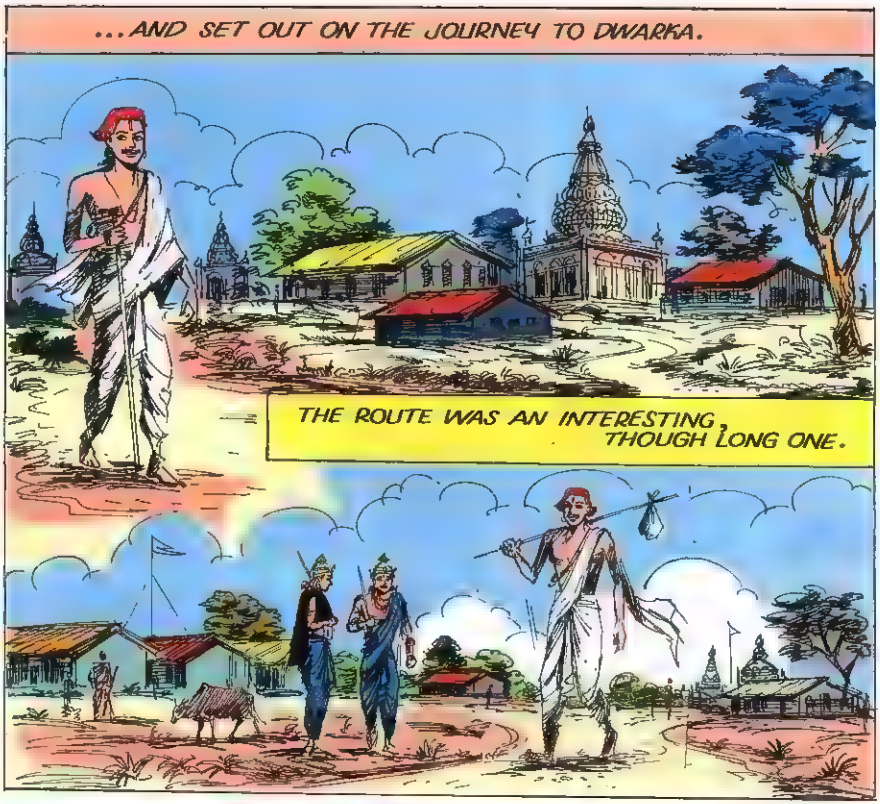

SUDAMA'S WIFE BROUGHT THE POWA TO HIM.

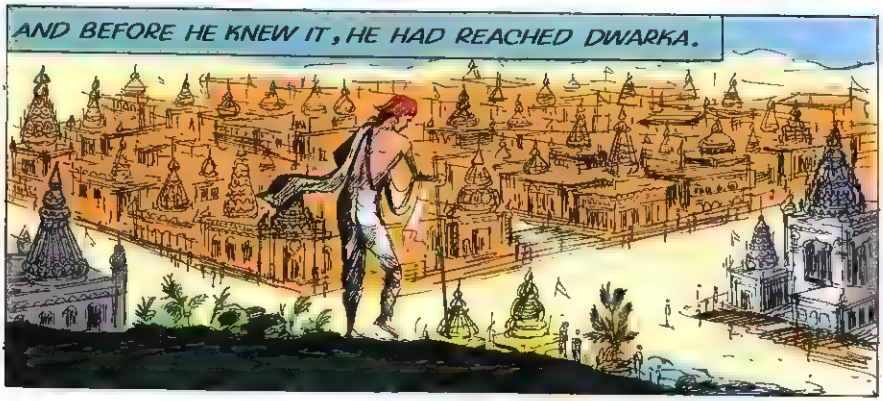
BUT SHE COULD FIND NOTHING TO TIE IT IN SO...

SHE TORE THE END OF HER GARMENT...

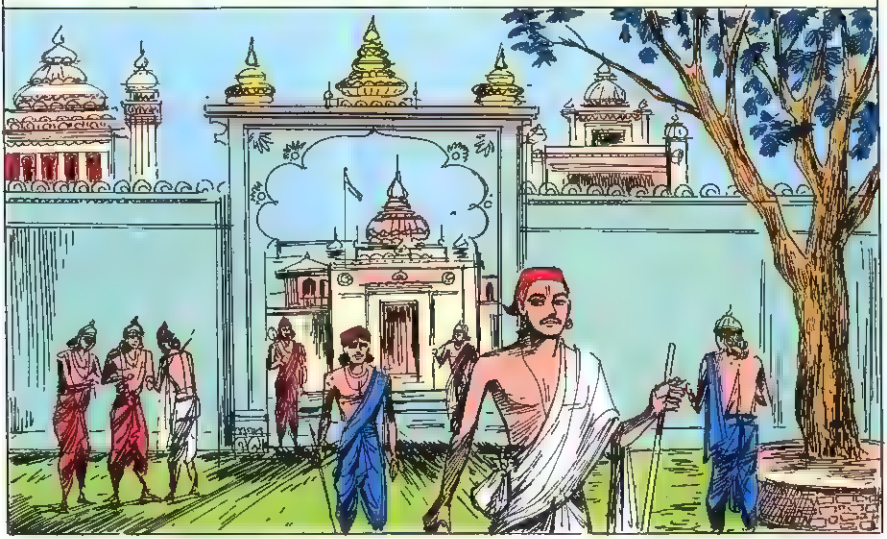

...AND HANDED THE BUNDLE OF POWA TO SUDAMA.
HERE, MY LORD.

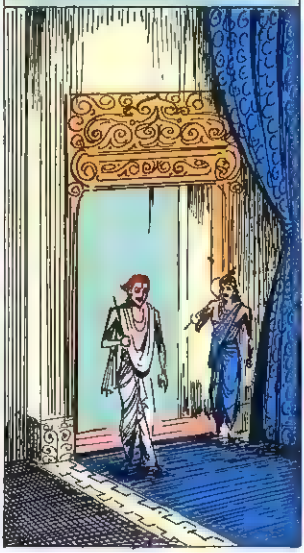
HE TOOK LEAVE OF HIS WIFE...

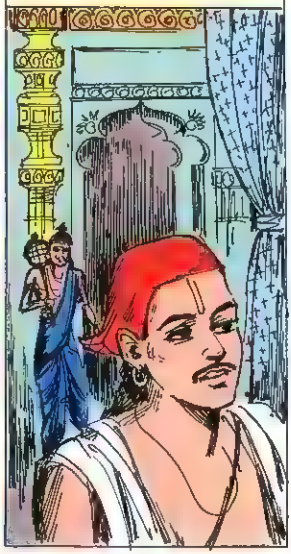

...AND SET OUT ON THE JOURNEY TO DWARKA.
THE ROUTE WAS AN INTERESTING, THOUGH LONG ONE.


AND BEFORE HE KNEW IT, HE HAD REACHED DWARKA.

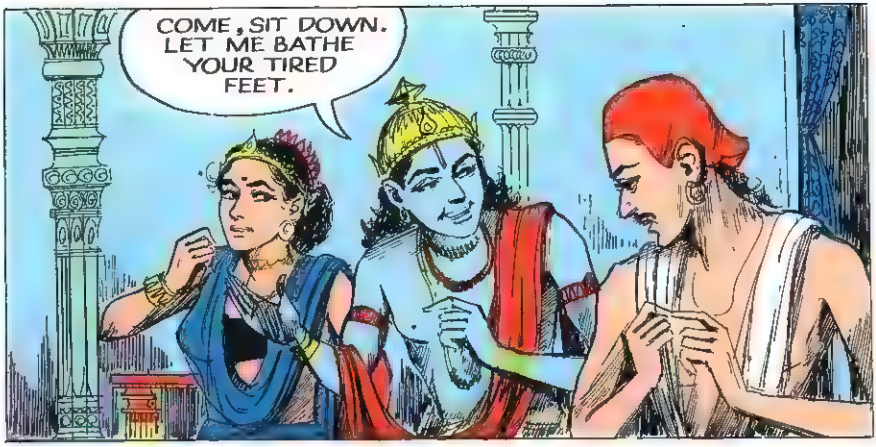
WHEN HE CAME TO THE OPEN GATES OF THE PALACE AT DWARKA, NO ONE STOPPED HIM AS HE ENTERED.

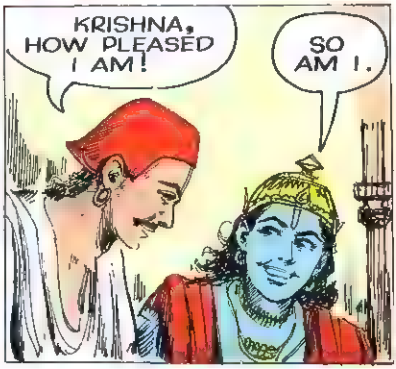


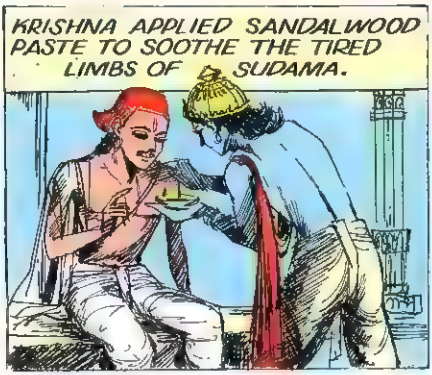


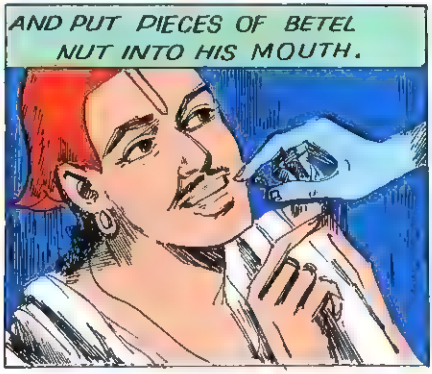


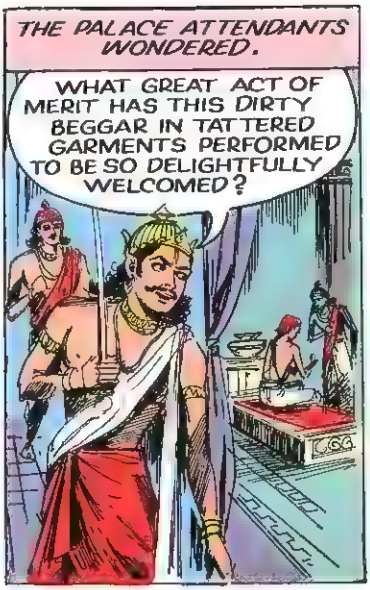
AT LAST HE FOUND KRISHNA AND RUKMINI.
LOOK! WHO IS THAT?
MY DEAR FRIEND-SUDAMA!
THIS IS THE FRIEND I'VE TALKED SO MUCH ABOUT.


COME, SIT DOWN. LET ME BATHE YOUR TIRED FEET.


KRISHNA, HOW PLEASED I AM!
SO AM I.


KRISHNA APPLIED SANDALWOOD PASTE TO SOOTHE THE TIRED LIMBS OF SUDAMA.


AND PUT PIECES OF BETEL NUT INTO HIS MOUTH.


THE PALACE ATTENDANTS WONDERED.
WHAT GREAT ACT OF MERIT HAS THIS DIRTY BEGGAR IN TATTERED GARMENTS PERFORMED TO BE SO DELIGHTFULLY WELCOMED?

RUKMINI, WE MUST DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE HIS STAY HERE COMFORTABLE.

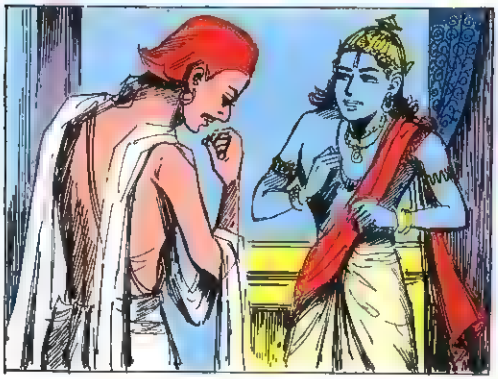
AT LAST AFTER SUDAMA WAS REFRESHED –
TELL ME, HAVE YOU MARRIED?
YES, MY WIFE IS A GOOD BRAHMAN WOMAN.

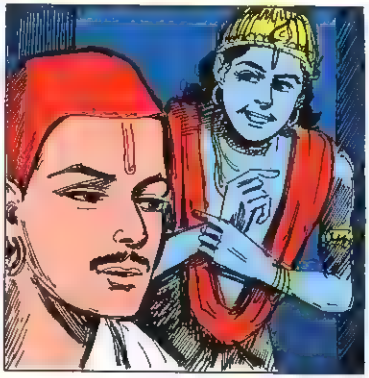
YOU LEAD A HOUSEHOLDER'S LIFE, BUT YOUR HEART IS FREE FROM ATTACHMENT. DOES YOUR WIFE ACCEPT YOUR WAY OF LIFE?

SHE HAS NEVER QUESTIONED IT.

KRISHNA SAW THE RAG BUNDLE, TIED TO SUDAMA'S WAIST.

AH! YOU HAVE BROUGHT A PRESENT FOR ME.

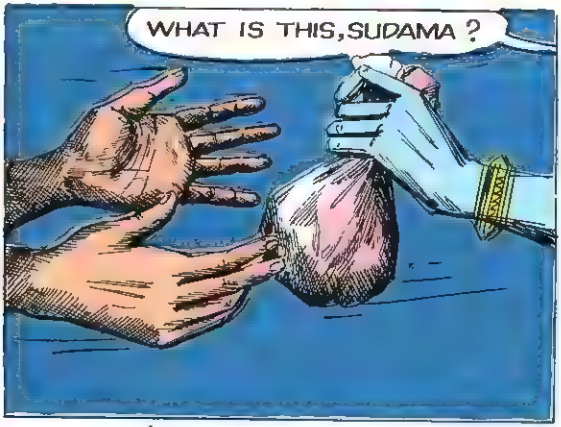


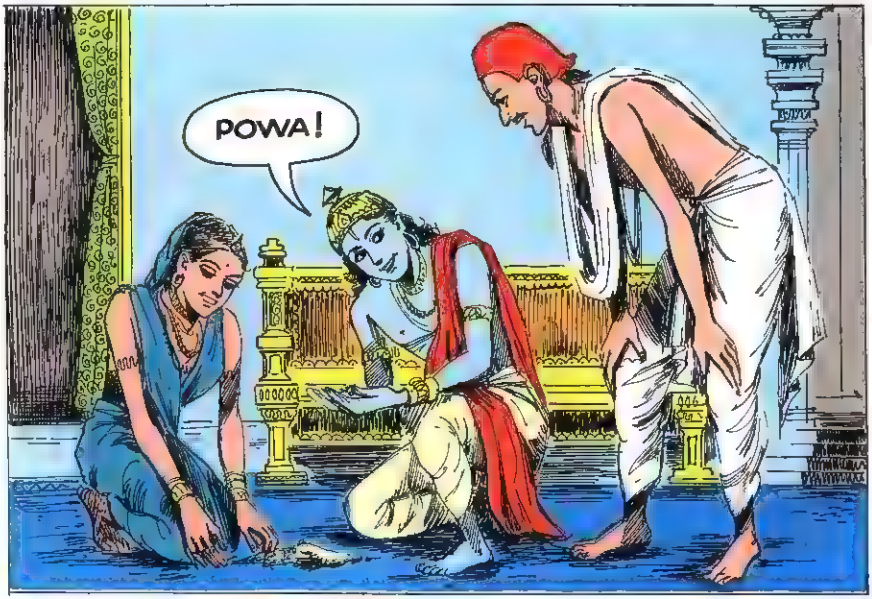


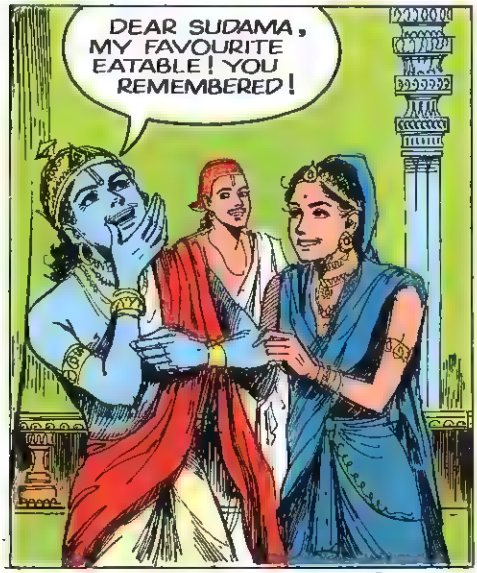
WHEN KRISHNA SAW THAT SUDAMA WAS ASHAMED TO GIVE HIM THE BUNDLE-
THE POOREST OF GIFTS GIVEN TO ME WITH LOVE IS DEARER TO ME THAN THE RICHEST OF GIFTS GIVEN WITHOUT LOVE.

HOW CAN I GIVE MY RAG BUNDLE TO ONE WHO HAS ALL?

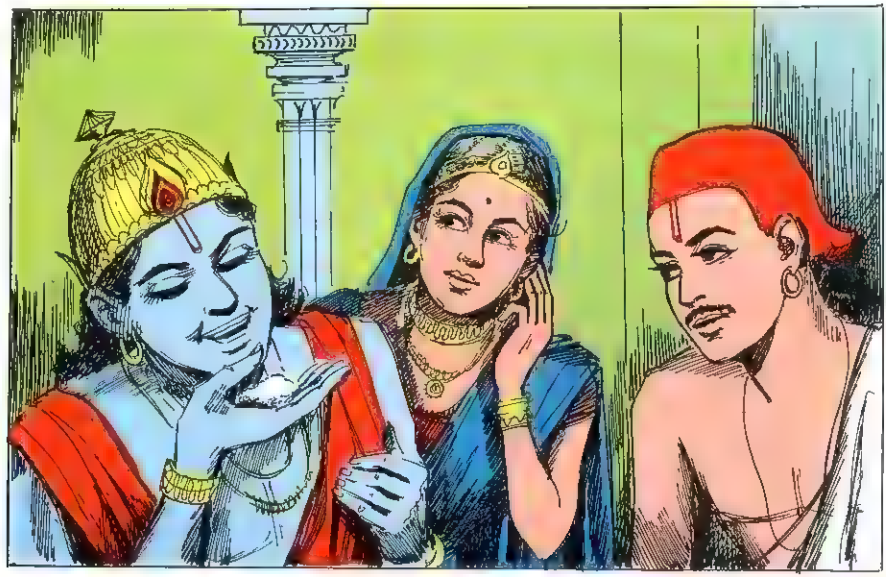
HE HAS NOT COME TO ASK ANYTHING FOR HIMSELF. HE HAS COME OUT OF LOVE FOR HIS WIFE AND ME!


WHAT IS THIS, SUDAMA?

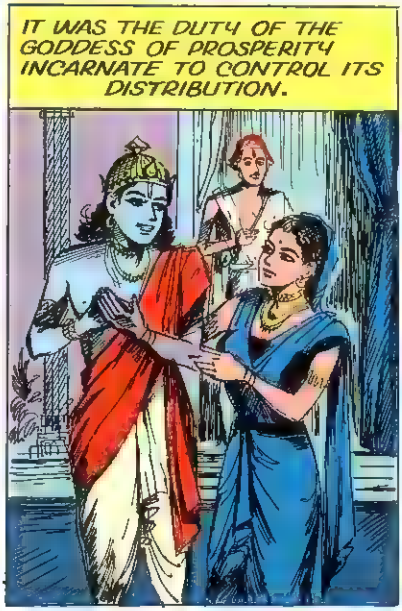

POWA!


DEAR SUDAMA, MY FAVOURITE EATABLE! YOU REMEMBERED!

AS IF I COULD EVER FORGET.



WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO PICK A SECOND HANDFUL -
ENOUGH, MY LORD!


IT WAS THE DUTY OF THE GODDESS OF PROSPERITY INCARNATE TO CONTROL ITS DISTRIBUTION.

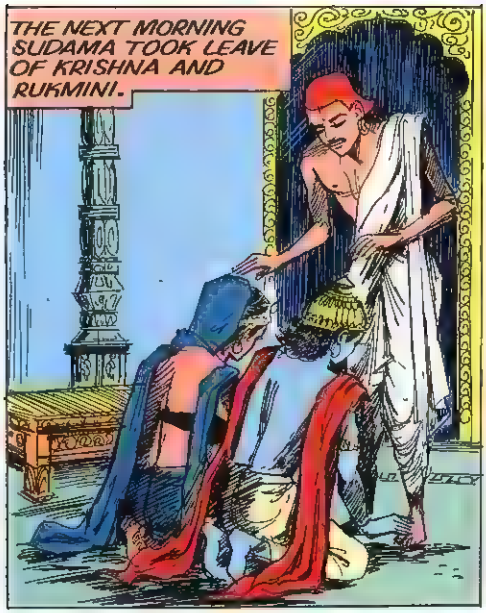
LORD! ONE MOUTHFUL IS ENOUGH TO GIVE HIM ALL HE NEEDS IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

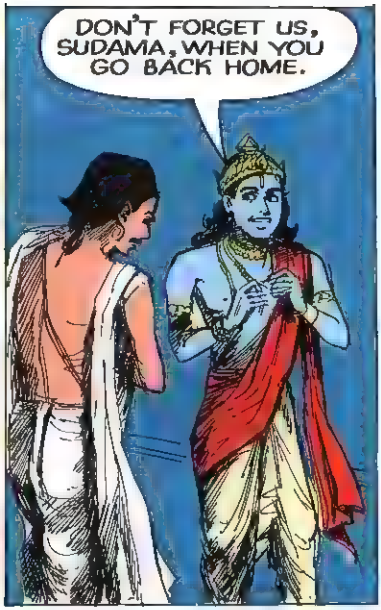
WHAT DOES SHE MEAN? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

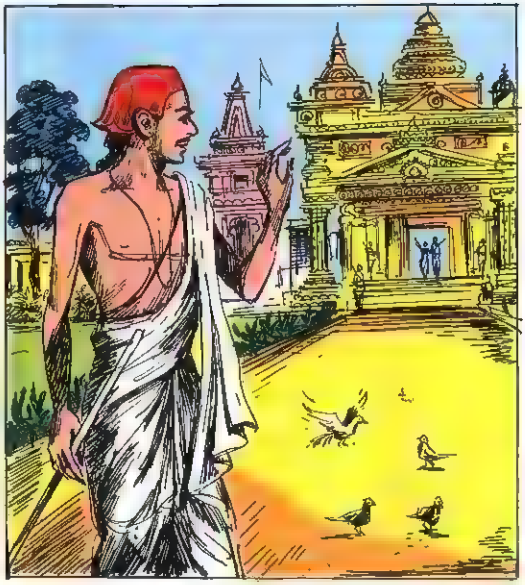
SHE IS RIGHT, SUDAMA.

KRISHNA ASKED SUDAMA TO SPEND THE NIGHT IN HIS PALACE. AS SUDAMA LAY HIMSELF ON THE LUXURIOUS BED-

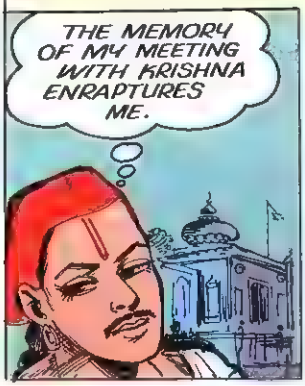
I AM INDEED IN HEAVEN.

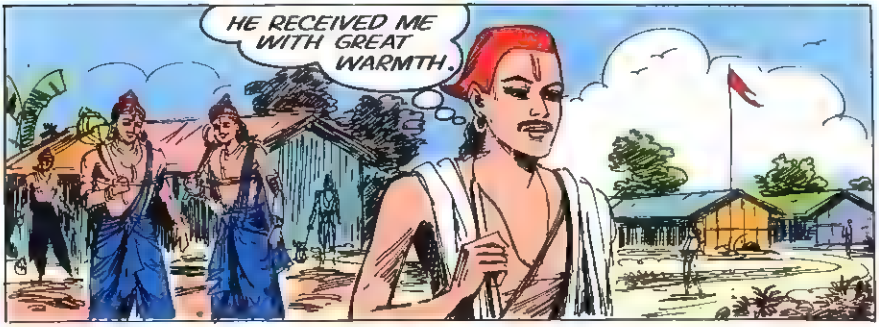

THE NEXT MORNING SUDAMA TOOK LEAVE OF KRISHNA AND RUKMINI.

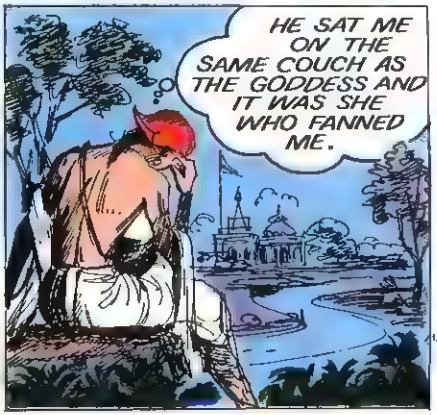

DON'T FORGET US, SUDAMA, WHEN YOU GO BACK HOME.



ON HIS WAY HOME, SUDAMA RELIVED HIS RECENT EXPERIENCES.



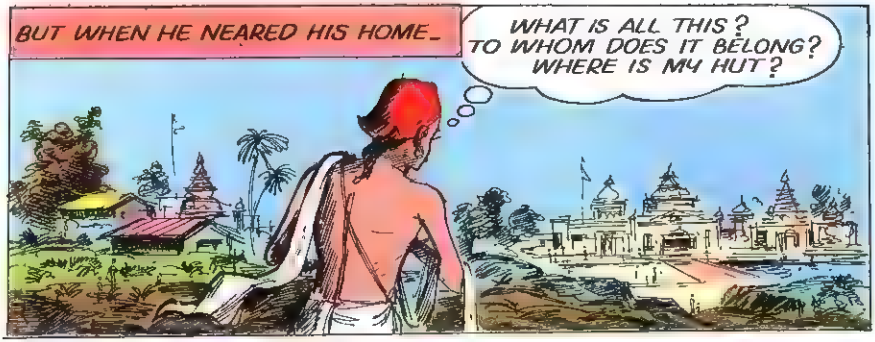




SUDAMA'S FEET ACHED.

I WAS RECEIVED WITH HOSPITALITY AND HE WASHED MY FEET.

HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT THAT IF HE GAVE ME WEALTH, I WOULD FORGET HIM. HE HAS SAVED ME. I AM FORTUNATE INDEED.

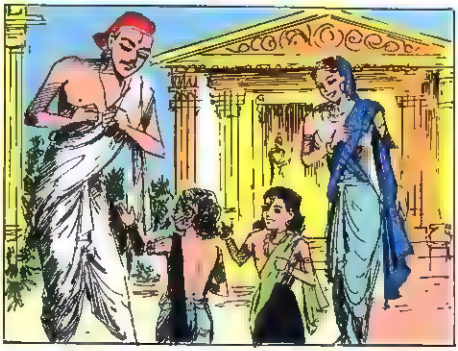

BUT WHEN HE NEARED HIS HOME_
WHAT IS ALL THIS ? TO WHOM DOES IT BELONG? WHERE IS MY HUT ?

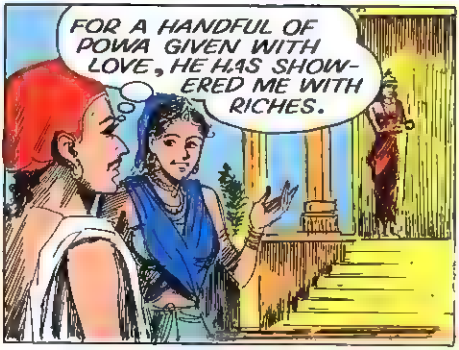
SUDAMA'S WIFE AND CHILDREN CAME OUT TO RECEIVE HIM. BUT–

MY LORD, DON'T YOU RECOGNISE ME?

FATHER, LOOK AT MY NEW CLOTHES.

AND SUDAMA UNDERSTOOD ALL.



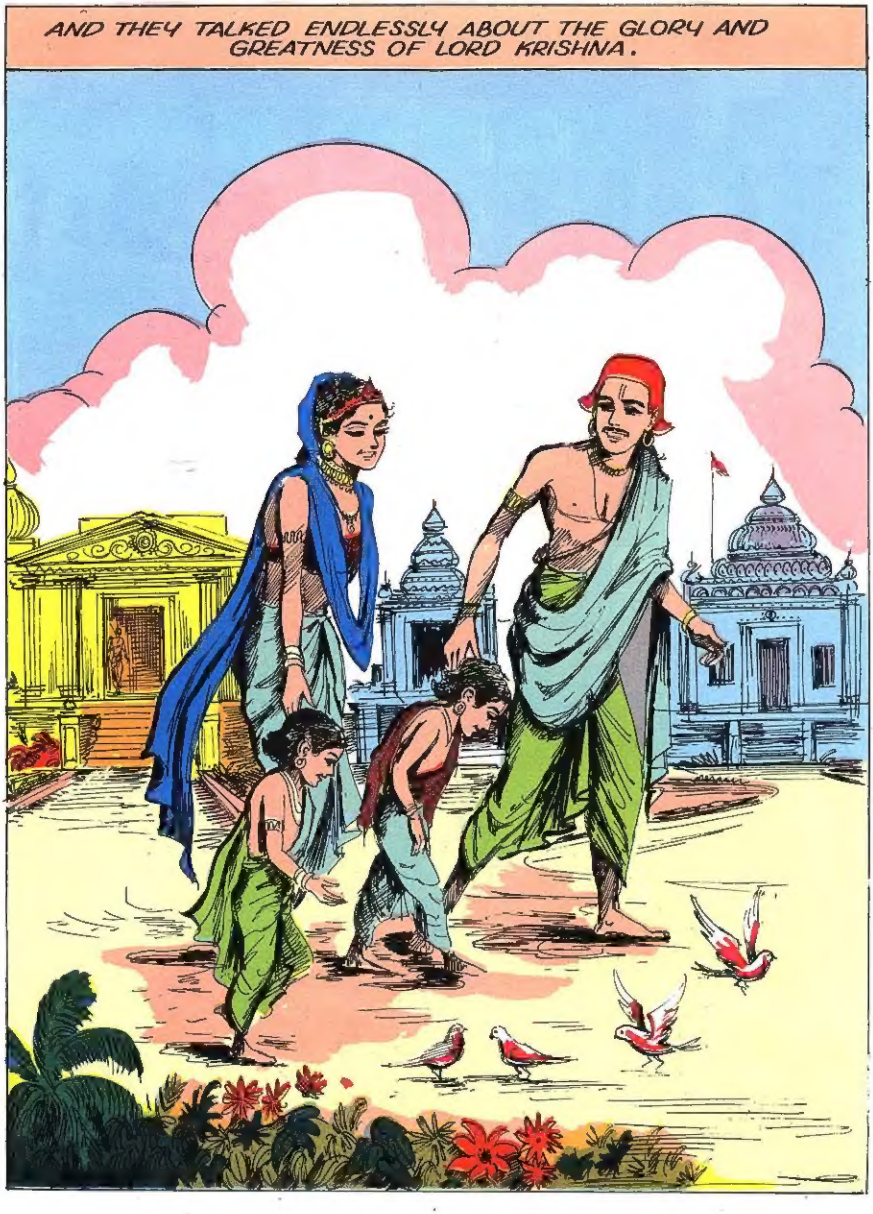


WHEN SUDAMA SAW THE LUXURY WITHIN -

BUT I MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO LET ALL THIS TURN MY HEAD!

LORD, TELL ME ALL. HOW DID THIS HAPPEN? WHAT DID YOU ASK KRISHNA?

BELIEVE ME! I ASKED FOR NOTHING. HE SHOWERED HIS LOVE AND AFFECTION ON ME. BUT...I COULDN'T ASK FOR ANYTHING. KRISHNA KNOWS ALL THAT IS IN OUR MINDS.


AND THEY TALKED ENDLESSLY ABOUT THE GLORY AND GREATNESS OF LORD KRISHNA.

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